

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



Contact:  
Thomas Sheridan, Seine Area Management Biologist  
Jeremy Botz, Gillnet Area Management Biologist  
Amanda Wiese, Assistant Area Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 424-3212 Fax: (907) 424-3235

Prince William Sound Area Office  
401 Railroad Avenue, PO Box 669  
Cordova, AK 99574-0669

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### Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #43

**SEINE FISHERIES:** Aerial surveys of the Eastern, Northern, Unakwik, Coghill, Northwestern, Eshamy and Southeastern districts were flown last week. Aerial surveys for the entirety of Prince William Sound are scheduled for this week.

At this time, VFDA has recommended standing down in Port Valdez to allow for the accumulation of pink salmon needed for broodstock. VFDA estimates at least 300,000 pink salmon secured for broodstock near the Solomon Gulch Hatchery. VFDA's broodstock needs are approximately 346,000 pink salmon. PWSAC began its pink salmon cost recovery program at AFK, CCH, and WNH on Thursday, July 26, and reports that the first significant fishing progress is underway today. Future CPF openings targeting PWSAC enhanced pink salmon will be determined by cost recovery fishing progress and run entry. ADF&G test fishing in the Southwestern District began on July 23, gauging pink salmon run entry and stock composition. The maximum set size per sample location has increased to approximately 600 – 1,700 pink salmon. Stock contribution estimates from Sunday, July 29 were 81% hatchery stock origin (SGH= 1%, CCH= 14%, WNH= 31%, and AFK hatchery = 35%) and 19% wild stock origin. Samples of pink salmon caught on July 29 resulted in an estimated 34% female, with a total sample size of 96 fish.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** Waters of the Coghill District within College Fiord, north of a latitude line at 61°00.45'N (Pt. Pakenham), will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET AND PURSE SEINE harvest for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 1. Regulatory closed waters pertaining to the Coghill River, as specified in 5 AAC 24.350(6)(B)), **WILL BE IN EFFECT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.** Anadromous stream closures in open waters of the Coghill District **will be in effect for this fishing period.**

A total of 1,260 sockeye and 2,231 pink salmon were passed at the Coghill River weir on July 27, and approximately 700 sockeye and 2,000 pink salmon were observed below the weir the next morning. The Coghill River Weir was pulled on Saturday, July 28. Cumulative passage is 71,978 versus a minimum anticipated goal of 18,751 sockeye salmon for this date. The commercial harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Saturday, July 28 is 2,300 chum, 550 sockeye, and 251,000 pink salmon with 62 deliveries reported.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District south of the latitude of Rocky Point, EXCLUDING ALL WATERS OF GALENA BAY, will open to commercial fishing for 14 hours on Wednesday, August 1 beginning at 6:00 am. Waters inside of all applicable Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers (Sheep Bay, Beartrap Bay, Olsen Bay, St. Matthews Bay, Irish Cove, Landlocked Bay and the Port Fidalgo Subdistrict) will be closed to commercial fishing for this period. SHTF marker coordinates are available at the Cordova ADF&G office, and have been provided to area processors, CDFU, VFDA and PWSAC for distribution to fishery participants. Waters of the Eastern District east of 145° 57.12' W. longitude, including waters of Simpson Bay, The Narrows and Nelson Bay, will be closed to commercial fishing during this period. All regulatory closed waters in the Eastern District as described in 5AAC 24.350(3) **will be in effect until further notice.** Anadromous stream closures in the Eastern District **will be in effect until further notice.** The commercial harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Saturday, July 28 is 28,700 chum, 680 sockeye, and 518,800 pink salmon with 98 deliveries reported. It is anticipated that fishery openings targeting wild pink and chum salmon in the Eastern District will be limited in frequency, with time and area for subsequent openers being dependent upon escapement, harvest and effort.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial fishing for 14 hours on Wednesday, August 1 beginning at 6:00 am. All regulatory closed waters in the Southeastern District as described in 5AAC 24.350(11) **will be in effect until further notice.** Anadromous stream closures in the Southeastern District **will be in effect until further notice.** The commercial harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Saturday, July 28 is 29,500 chum, 80 sockeye, and 137,100 pink salmon with 37 deliveries reported. It is anticipated that fishery openings

targeting wild pink and chum salmon in the Southeastern District will be limited in frequency, with time and area for subsequent openers being dependent upon escapement, harvest and effort.

As a reminder, **all salmon that are harvested but not sold by commercial permit holders in Alaska waters must be reported on a fish ticket at the time of landing (5AAC 39.130(c)(10))**. Fish tickets have a “not sold/personal use” field to report these salmon.

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Wednesday, August 1.** Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.